



2025-2026 School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

About this place:

With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam Nation), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumix (Squamish Nation) & səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

Sexsmith Elementary school is located near the Fraser River on the south side of Vancouver, on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) & səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. Our school property runs adjacent to the Langara Trail where students often walk and we often use the nearby green space, Winona Park where students take part in diverse, land-based learning activities. The view to the south, seen from our second floor windows, includes YVR and students learn about nearby bike routes, as well as the Punjabi Market to the east. Our school is situated near the Sunset Community Centre and Gateway Skytrain Station.

About our learners:

There are 433 students at Sexsmith Elementary; a diverse group of kindergarten to grade 7 learners, from various socio-economic backgrounds and with a broad range of strengths and stretches make up our student body. Our learners are enthusiastic about their diverse cultural backgrounds and about celebrating each others' cultures at school. There are more than 21 language groups at Sexsmith, and many of our learners are new to Canada.

About our school program:

Our school program involves learners working with Sexsmith staff to meet their own personal learning goals through the [Core Competencies](#), and following the [BC Curriculum](#). We follow the VSB district calendar and offer a variety of programs to make our school the best it can be for students and over 45 regular staff members. We have many options for learners including athletics teams and a year-round Intramural program as well as a growing music program at Sexsmith. Students participate in service and volunteer roles, leadership training, student council, lunch clubs for chess, gardening, and other interests. Each term we work with community partners to offer a few recreational programs for

students to register for, often including themes such as STEM and coding, art, yoga and mindfulness, Punjabi Heritage Language and Cantonese Language classes, dance and music.

About our learning focus:

At Sexsmith, we strive to focus on individual student learning needs, especially with literacy and numeracy skills. To enhance our curriculum offerings, and to meet the social emotional learning needs of all students, we provide project-based learning opportunities that focus on creating a strong sense of belonging. We share and connect with our community through annual events stemming from staff passions and expertise including athletics, science celebrations, Heritage fair events, sustainability programs and more.

We honour the Indigenous Principles of Learning and weave them into our classroom practices. Our staff create a learning environment focused on collaboration, including buddy and partnership classes as well as the use of technology for communication and representation. We engage in programs and activities that celebrate student achievement, physical and mental well-being, belonging, equity and Reconciliation.

About our PAC and community network:

Our parent/guardian community is strong and supportive. Caring volunteers provide an annual calendar of cultural events at Sexsmith, including many former parents and caregivers who come back each year to support the extracurricular engagement at our school. Our PAC (parent advisory council) hosts fundraisers to enhance our learning program, especially working to develop funds for technology, fieldtrips and extracurricular activities. There is a long tradition at Sexsmith of PAC working with the Arbutus Rotary Club as well as community volunteers to host events for Diwali, Christmas, Lunar New Year and Filipino Fiesta each year. Students of every culture get involved with learning traditional dances, games and ceremonies. Our PAC also creates opportunities for families to connect and foster a sense of community by hosting regular movie nights, which help strengthen bonds between students and families. Parent volunteers created a weekly hot lunch program and we strive to ensure each class has representation on the Sexsmith PAC. We coordinate with Sunset Community Centre, Marpole Neighbourhood House and the Churchill Family of Schools to provide support for families and opportunities for extracurricular involvement.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

J.W. Sexsmith Elementary staff and students are dedicated to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment that supports each child's unique learning journey. Our school community comprises 433 students from various cultural backgrounds, including over 160 English Language Learners and integrated support needs students, collectively speaking more than 21 languages.

Anecdotal evidence in classrooms and our office highlights students' commitment to inclusion through initiatives such as buddy class programs, universal inclusion strategies for neurodivergent students, peer helper programs on the playground, and leadership roles in assemblies and announcements. Student participation in these programs and in volunteerism around our school has significantly increased over the last two years, emphasizing the importance of giving back to the school community.

Whether it's holding the door for others daily after recess, or speaking at monthly assemblies, students, particularly those in grades 3-7, demonstrate a growing focus on social-emotional learning and inclusion.

We use a variety of school-based data review processes to identify student strengths and needs and to guide intervention planning. During our bi-annual class reviews, staff collaborate to discuss student progress, identify areas of need, and determine which students may benefit from targeted academic, social-emotional, or behavioural supports. Interventions are informed through School-Based Team discussions, ongoing classroom observations, and consultation with District Learning Services.

To monitor the effectiveness of our supports, we track office referrals and participation in targeted interventions, including counselling services and friendship groups. This data helps us evaluate the impact of our school-wide approaches and adjust supports as needed. Since implementing our school-wide code of conduct, Sexsmith STARS, we have observed an overall reduction in student behaviour concerns, suggesting increased consistency in expectations and support across the school.

We also continue to review student achievement and well-being data through SPACES EDU Learning Updates and other assessment measures to identify trends, celebrate successes, and inform next steps for school improvement.

The SLS data from the last two years shows that students have a clear understanding of school expectations and use social-emotional learning (SEL) program language to express themselves. We recognize that students across all grades have unique social-emotional needs. To gather insights, we employ various engagement strategies, including teachers' observations, the Middle Years' Developmental Instrument (MDI), parent feedback from the Student Learning Survey, and conversations at PAC-sponsored events. We also engage with students regarding their learning, progress and ideas through formal conferencing, small group discussions, student interviews, student volunteer roles and student council consultation.

At Sexsmith, we are dedicated to supporting our students in meeting grade-level expectations for literacy, encompassing reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and representing. Our students exhibit a strong sense of belonging and connection to each other and the school culture. Overall, we believe in the following about our student needs and community focus:

- we have a Cohesive Learning Approach: Over the past three years, the school has worked on creating a unified approach to school expectations and learning goals.
- we monitor Student Support Needs: Ongoing support is needed for problem-solving skills, personal awareness, emotional regulation, and social media safety.
- we believe in Experiential Learning: Increasing opportunities for hands-on learning and strengthening connections with adults at school.

- we value Social Emotional Learning (SEL): We are collecting data about the students who require SEL interventions; our classrooms engage with SEL programs including: Second Step, MindUp, The Little Spot, TAPS, Consent Program, Strong Bodies Strong Kids, The Social Thinking Curriculum and the Zones of Regulation. We are seeking to create common language across grade levels so students can connect their learning over the years.

Specific Learning Groups and our Target Areas:

At J.W. Sexsmith Elementary, 9.6% of students have identified support needs, each with an Individual Education Plan and many with positive behavior support plans. Additionally, 29% of our students are identified as English Language Learners, speaking more than one language and requiring support with English language learning. Our school is committed to Reconciliation and educating both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students about the land and community.

Engaging literacy programs for younger students, including read-alouds, family and buddy reading, phonemic awareness lessons and bookmaking projects, are woven into daily life at Sexsmith. Our primary teachers focus on phonemic awareness using the UFLI (University of Florida Institute) program and other targeted approaches to teaching reading fluency. UFLI literacy program focuses on improving literacy outcomes for children through systematic instruction and professional development for educators. Culturally responsive teaching methods and literacy programs are important to our teaching staff, and efforts such as cultural celebration read-alouds and exposure to multicultural perspectives are commonly practiced in the classrooms.

Literacy Assessment

As a staff, we are focusing on literacy assessment. This year refocused our kindergarten to grade 3 classes with using a common tool: the DIBELS assessment. In the fall, these scores gave indications of our kindergarten students demonstrating strength in letter naming but needing more focus time in oral language and phonemic awareness learning.

In addition, this winter, all students in Grades 2–7 completed a DIBELS MAZE comprehension test. In this assessment, students scoring at or above the 40th percentile are considered “on track,” meaning they are meeting expectations and will typically succeed with regular classroom instruction. Students below the 40th percentile are “not yet on track,” indicating they understand less of the text than most peers and may need targeted support to meet end-of-year literacy goals.

We viewed this data as a staff to discuss trends and observations. We noted that, between 60-70% of students across the school are on track, with a gradual improvement pattern across most grades. Our strongest results appear in Grades 4 and 5, and we discussed how these cohorts benefitted from consistent instruction and earlier targeted interventions. The data also highlights areas needing closer attention. Grade 7 students showed the highest percentage of students not yet on track, including many ELL learners and students with Q/R/G designations. The reading demands and task complexity at this level may be outpacing current skills for a number of students. Across the school, fewer than half

of ELL students are on track, with intermediate ELL learners showing a wider gap than those in primary. Within the SPED data, primary students demonstrate the greatest need in foundational reading skills.

As a school, we are moving forward with purposeful next steps. These include running short diagnostic follow-ups for students with unexpected results, offering focused small-group instruction (ELL, SPED, and Grade 7 strategy groups), and balancing assessments that capture both reading process and product. We will continue reviewing progress as primary and intermediate teams to ensure our support remains responsive to student needs.

Trusted Adults

Students at J.W. Sexsmith Elementary benefit from a strong network of trusted adults who provide care, guidance, and emotional support. According to the 2024-25 Student Learning Survey, 64% of grade 4 students report that they know of 2 or more adults who care about them in the school and 48% of grade 7 students report the same. We want students to know that staff care about them, value their voices and are available to listen when students want to share. Sexsmith staff value student questions and concerns; staff want to ensure that students know we are there to support and guide them. We continue to work on developing trust, connection and communication with our students and their families. We continue to focus on creating a school environment in which supportive relationships and open communication are central to students' daily experiences. Despite a gradual increase in the data about trusted adults at school, we hope that this will increase more rapidly. Staff continue to collaborate regularly, building coordinated support teams around students with emerging or ongoing needs, ensuring that emotional well-being remains a top priority. This shared commitment allows every learner to feel seen and supported.

The strong relationships students form with trusted adults, combined with their growing engagement and sense of agency, directly support our school's overarching goals in literacy achievement, equity, and belonging. When students feel safe, supported, and connected, they are better positioned to take risks in their learning, develop confidence in their literacy skills, and participate fully in school life. Our continued focus on equitable supports, culturally responsive practices, and inclusive learning environments ensures that all students—regardless of background, language, or learning profile—can thrive.

AS A SCHOOL COMMUNITY, WE ARE WORKING ON THE FOLLOWING TO:

Improve student achievement in literacy and numeracy, physical and mental well-being, and belonging.

As a school community, we are actively focusing on strengthening literacy achievement as a central goal area for our school. We use assessment information thoughtfully to inform instruction, including conducting quick diagnostic follow-ups in areas such as phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension when results are borderline or unexpected. Across grade levels, students engage in short, frequent opportunities to build reading fluency through practices such as repeated and partner reading.

We provide targeted supports through flexible small-group instruction, including explicit and cumulative phonemic awareness and phonics teaching for primary students receiving learning support, and focused language instruction for English Language Learners. For ELL newcomers, vocabulary goals are intentionally connected to current classroom content, with strategies that leverage students' home languages through the use of cognates and dual-language glossaries. Intermediate ELL students receive targeted instruction in morphology, academic vocabulary, and sentence frames to support oral and written comprehension responses, while Grade 7 students participate in strategy groups that focus on skills such as identifying main ideas, summarizing, inferencing with text evidence, and developing effective reading routines for more complex texts.

Within classrooms, teachers intentionally balance attention to both learning processes and final products by using assessment strategies such as think-alouds, annotated texts, and exit slips that capture students' strategy use alongside demonstrated understanding. Students are encouraged to show their learning in multiple ways, including oral retells, graphic organizers, and short written responses, to increase engagement and ensure an accurate picture of what they know.

In addition, we have begun a new school-based inquiry in which the principal is interviewing students at various grade levels about their experiences with reading and writing. These conversations are designed to elevate student voice, deepen our understanding of student metacognition, and gather insight into how students approach literacy tasks, the strategies they use, and where they experience challenges. This information will help inform future instructional decisions and school-wide planning. Together, these approaches reflect our shared commitment to building strong, confident readers through responsive teaching, inclusive practices, and purposeful instructional design.

Improve equity

Improving equity through inclusive practices is a key focus for our school community at this time. We are working intentionally to destigmatize and make visible the diverse supports, spaces, and equipment needed to ensure all learners feel safe, valued, and able to engage fully in school life. Over the past year, we have developed a range of inclusive learning environments, including a dedicated sensory room, multipurpose break spaces, individualized in-class sensory areas, and a mini motor lab designed to support regulation, movement, and readiness to learn. Staff have received training in the Ready Bodies, Learning Minds program and materials, enabling us to proactively support the sensory and self-regulation needs of our more than 30 neurodivergent learners.

We are also committed to strengthening inclusive connections within our diverse parent and caregiver community and recognize this as an ongoing area of growth. Working alongside PAC, we aim to support inclusive initiatives such as accessible playground enhancements and to ensure that every school event is thoughtfully planned to be equitable, welcoming, and accessible to all families. Together, these efforts reflect our shared belief that inclusion is an essential foundation for belonging, well-being, and student success.

We are equally committed to supporting our diverse learners by ensuring equitable access to the curriculum through flexible and responsive teaching practices. Using a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach, staff design learning experiences that offer multiple means of engagement,

representation, and expression. While traditional writing remains important, we also value approaches that reflect student voice, creativity, and individual strengths.

To support project-based learning, classrooms incorporate a range of tools and technologies. Students access iPads, laptops, and digital platforms such as Canva and Microsoft applications to create, design, and share their learning in ways that work best for them. Staff also demonstrated leadership by securing an ADST grant through Simon Fraser University, allowing us to expand hands-on opportunities with tools such as ChompSaws for safe building and prototyping. We have also begun integrating green screen technology to support more immersive and interactive learning experiences. Alongside opportunities in theatre and performance, these approaches reflect our commitment to inclusive, accessible environments where all students can meaningfully engage with and demonstrate their learning.

Continue on our journey of reconciliation with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit

Sexsmith staff continue on our Reconciliation journey through professional learning, curriculum design, and daily school-wide practices including meaningful and culturally responsive teaching and sharing of Land Acknowledgements. Parents have engaged with our daily land acknowledgments as well, supporting our grade 1 and 2 students with practicing and learning the correct pronunciation for the Host Nations in our community. Through daily announcements, shared routines, and classroom conversations, students are learning and using words and phrases from the *hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓* language, helping to normalize Indigenous language use and ways of being within the school community. This learning is becoming increasingly visible through hallway displays, classroom signs, and shared spaces, with student-created visuals and language contributions helping to foster connection and pride.

Cultural learning and engagement have also grown through school-wide events and classroom-based experiences that honour Indigenous cultures and traditions. Students have participated in storytelling, creative projects, and hands-on learning experiences that allow them to explore Indigenous teachings in developmentally appropriate ways. Increasing emphasis has been placed on student voice, with students sharing their learning through presentations, art, writing, and reflective discussions.

Classes are beginning to co-construct questions, wonderings, and reflections connected to Indigenous learning, allowing students to take greater ownership of how they demonstrate understanding and express their thinking. Learning opportunities have included engagement with Indigenous voices and perspectives to support staff learning and reflection. Curriculum connections have expanded across grade levels, with classrooms embedding Indigenous ways of knowing into lesson plans and interdisciplinary learning experiences that support meaningful connections to place, identity, and community.

Resource development remains an ongoing focus, with classrooms and the school library continuing to expand collections that highlight Indigenous histories, cultures, and contemporary contributions. These resources are being used to support both student inquiry and staff planning. Sexsmith continues to

strengthen an inclusive school culture where Indigenous perspectives are valued, student voice is amplified, and all learners feel a sense of belonging and connection to the land and community.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

We will monitor our progress using a combination of student learning data, classroom observations, and feedback from students, staff, and families to ensure our actions are leading to improved outcomes in literacy, well-being, equity, and belonging. We use a range of school-based data review processes to identify student strengths and needs, guide intervention planning, and monitor the impact of our supports. Through bi-annual class reviews, School-Based Team meetings, and consultation with District Learning Services, staff collaborate to determine appropriate academic, social-emotional, and behavioural supports for students.

To evaluate the effectiveness of these supports, we regularly review school-wide data, including student behaviour trends and participation in targeted interventions. This ongoing analysis helps us refine our practices and respond to emerging needs.

We also review student achievement and well-being data through SPACES EDU Learning Updates and other assessment measures to identify trends, celebrate successes, and inform ongoing school improvement efforts.

In literacy specifically, we continue to use assessment tools such as DIBELS (K–7) to track growth in foundational skills and reading comprehension. We look for increases in the percentage of students meeting expectations (currently approximately 60–70% on track) and improvements among specific groups, including English Language Learners, Grade 7 students, and students with support needs. Ongoing classroom-based assessments—such as reading responses, oral retells, and written work—will also provide insight into both student progress and strategy use. Staff meet regularly in primary and intermediate teams to review data, identify trends, and adjust instruction and supports.

To support student well-being and belonging, we will monitor data from sources such as the Student Learning Survey (SLS) and classroom observations. We will look for an increase in the number of students who report having trusted adults at school (currently 64% in Grade 4 and 48% in Grade 7), as well as continued growth in student participation in leadership opportunities, peer support roles, and school activities. Feedback gathered through student conversations, interviews, and conferences will help us better understand student experiences and sense of connection.

In the area of equity and inclusion, we will track the use and impact of inclusive spaces (such as sensory rooms and flexible learning environments), as well as student engagement across diverse learning groups. Staff observations, student voice, and family feedback will help us determine whether students feel that learning opportunities are accessible, responsive, and supportive of their individual needs. We will also monitor participation from families in school events and PAC initiatives to ensure our community connections are inclusive and reflective of our student population.

As part of our ongoing Reconciliation work, we will look for increased visibility and integration of Indigenous perspectives in classrooms and across the school. This includes observing student

engagement with Indigenous learning experiences, the use of Indigenous language, and the presence of culturally respectful materials and displays. Staff reflection and collaboration will continue to guide this work.

Across all areas, ongoing staff collaboration will be essential. Teachers and support staff will regularly review evidence of student learning and well-being, share effective practices, and make adjustments to ensure that supports remain responsive. By combining data, observation, and student voice, we will ensure that our school continues to move forward in supporting student achievement, inclusion, and a strong sense of belonging for all learners.